

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: SHUM, CSCE, PFOR, SZ

SUBJ: SWISS REACTION ON CHARTER 77 AND HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT

REF: STATE 18234

1. SUMMARY: THERE HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLE PRESS COMMENT ON PRESIDENT CARTER'S EXCHANGE OF LETTERS WITH ANDRE SAKHAROV, AND ON CHARTER 77 ACTIVISTS. PRESS INTERPRETED THESE EVENTS AS INDICATING NEW US POLICY DESIGNED TO TEST SOVIET INTENTIONS AND PORTENDING NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN UNITY, CSCE AND EURO-COMMUNISM. FEDERAL COUNCILOR GRABER'S JAN 24 SPEECH EXPRESSED SWISS GOVERNMENTS VIEW ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN EUROPEAN CONTEXT. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESS GENERALL INTERPRETED PRESIDENTS EXCHANGE OF LETTERS WITH SAKHAROV AS NEW ADMINISTRATION DEPARTURE FROM PREVIOUS POLICY OF DISCRETE DIPLOMACY. US SEEN PUTTING SOVIETS TO EARLY TEST ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE DESPITE PARALLEL US DESIRE TO AVOID DISPUTES AND REACH AGREEMENT ON MUTUAL REDUCTION OF NUCLEAR ARSENALS. SVERAL ARTICLES, BEFORE THE END-OF-LINKAGE-POLICY ANNOUNCED, EXPRESSED BELIEF THAT SOVIET RESPONSE ON HUMAN RIGHTS WOULD DETERMINE US POLICY TOWARD USSR.

3. IN BROADER CONTEXT, SEVERAL PAPERS REPORTED THERE MAY BE UNCLASSIFIED

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OVERALL CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATIONS POLICY, PARTICULARLY AN END TO SONNENFELDT DOCTRINE TOWARD EASTERN EUROPE. IN GENERAL, PRESS REPORTED THAT NEW ADMINISTRATIONS: A) SEEKS TO PROMOTE POLYCENTRISM IN EAST BLOC SOCIALISM; B) NOT OPPOSED TO EURO-COMMUNISM; C) NOT OPPOSED TO ACCELERATED WEST EUROPEAN UNITY; D) SEEKS REDUCED ALLIED DEPENDENCE ON US; AND E) WILL NOT GIVE UNQUALIFIED SUPPORT TO

AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES IN LATIN AMERICA. SEVERAL PAPERS FELT US PRESIDENT WILL BE FIRM IN FACING OBSTACLES BUT IT TOO SOON TO PREDICT OUTCOME.

4. SEVERAL ARTICLES RELATED HUMAN RIGHTS EFFORTS OF CHARTER 77 ACTIVISTS (WHO SEEK DIALOGUE NOT CONFRONTATION WITH CZECH AUTHORITIES) TO EURO-COMMUNISM. ARTICLES COMMENTED THAT SOVIETS SEEMED UNCERTAIN HOW TO RESPOND TO BOTH MOVEMENTS AND SPECULATED THAT PREVIOUS SPIRIT OF "PRAGUE SPRING" IN EAST COULD BECOME "ROMAN SPRING" COMING FROM WEST. ONE EDITORIALIST INTERPRETED DESIRE FOR EUROPEAN UNITY IN BROAD CSCE CONTEXT AS MEANS TO DIMINISH SOVIET HEGEMONY THROUGH CIVIL RIGHTS EFFORTS AND CONCLUDED THAT THIS GOAL IS NOT ENTIRELY UTOPIAN AFTER HELSINKI FINAL ACT, WHICH SOVIETS IRONICALLY SOUGHT SO LONG TO ACHIEVE.

5. MOST PRESS ARTICLES FOCUSED ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN RELATION TO CSCE. EDITORIALISTS GENERALLY REPORTED THAT NEW US ADMINISTRATION SETTING NEW TONE IN ITS FOREIGN POLICY, DESPITE PREVIOUS US SUCCESS IN SUCH CASES AS BUKOVSKY, TO PUT HELSINKI FINAL ACT TO TEST AT BELGRADE AND SHOW THAT CSCE NOT TO BE CONSIDERED ONE WAY STREET. PRESS ALSO REPORTED RECENT SOVIET WARNING THAT WEST SHOULD NOT SET UP COURT TO JUDGE EAST ON HUMAN RIGHTS. EDITORIALISTS AGREED THAT DILEMMA EXISTS HOW TO FURTHER HUMAN RIGHTS WITHOUT DESTROYING EAST-WEST DIALOGUE OR BRINGING REPERCUSSIONS ON ACTIVISTS LIKE CHARTER 77. MOST CONCLUDED THERE IS NO CLEAR ANSWER TO DILEMMA BETWEEN MORAL OBLIGATION AND POLITICAL OBJECTIVES; THERE MUST BE EFFORT TO FIND THE WAY BETWEEN BOTH ISSUES. SEVERAL PAPERS DISCOUNTED POSSIBLE DEPORTATION
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OF CHARTER 77 ACTIVISTS BUT SPECULATED THAT THREATS OF PUNISHMENT MIGHT LEAD TO SELF-IMPOSED EXILE.

6. FEDERAL COUNCILOR GRABER EXPRESSED GOVTS VIEWS IN JAN 24 SPEECH ON FUTURE OF EUROPE. GRABER SAID SWISS DESIRE EUROPE CONSTITUTIONALLY AND SOCIALLY BIASED TOWARD HUMAN RIGHTS AND ASSURED CIVIL LIBERTIES, PARTICULARLY TO FREELY ELECT PARLIAMENTS THAT DECIDE ON MAJORITY RULE. HE STRESSED THAT EUROPEAN AUTHORITY SHOULD NOT BE MARKED BY SUPPRESSED PUBLIC OPINION, CENSORED PRESS AND POLITICAL PRISONERS BUT BY FREE SPEECH, EVEN IN OPPOSITION. GRABER STATED THAT SWISS SEEK A EUROPE THAT PROMOTES HAPPINESS FOR ALL INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS AND NOT A UNIFORM CITIZENRY. HE EMPHASIZED THAT AFTER HELSINKI, THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS NO LONGER CAN BE DISPOSED OF AS AN INTERNAL MATTER OF STATE. GRABER SAID THAT THE MEANING OF HELSINKI WILL BECOME CLEAR WITH TIME, AND SWISS ARE CAREFULLY FOLLOWING EVENTS TO TAKE STOCK AT BELGRADE OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED THUS FAR. GRABER ADDED THAT SWISS ARE CONVINCED THAT FUTURE OF NEUTRAL STATES IN EUROPE DEPENDS NOT ON THEIR JOINING

ALLIANCES BUT RATHER IN THE CREDIBILITY OF THEIR EFFORTS TO
CONTRIBUTE TO LAYING DEMOCRATIC FOUNDATION SO THAT INDIVIDUAL
FREEDOM WILL NOT BE TAKEN LIGHTLY. HE AFFIRMED THAT EUROPEAN UNITY
SUPPORTS THE HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES OF HELSINKI.
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